



NEWS RELEASE

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Some recruiters against POEA policies but extorting money from workers -- Baldoz

POEA Administrator Rosalinda Dimapilis-Baldoz denounced some recruitment agencies who are pretending to be against the reform package for Filipino domestic helpers but are actually using the same policies to extract more money from the workers.

Baldoz said that in consultation meeting yesterday with some non-government organizations (NGOs) presided by Ms. Mina Gabor, the women sector representative to the POEA Governing Board, a NGO from Hong Kong admitted that some recruitment agencies are requiring returning workers from Hong Kong to undergo training and skills assessment although the new policies will apply to them only on March 1, 2007.

Daphne Ceniza of Filcomsin Hong Kong said the recruitment agency even required the workers to undergo assessment four times, paying P1,000 each time.

"I suspect that the recruitment agency also owns the training and assessment center or taking a commission from the center for every referred worker if it does not own the center," Baldoz said.

Skills training is not mandatory under the new regulation, Baldoz emphasized. What is required is skills assessment and for returning HSWs from Hong Kong and those with experience can go through portfolio assessment by merely submitting documents evidencing possession of the skills competencies equivalent to NC2. They do not even need to go through the actual trade test.

Baldoz vehemently denied that the package of reforms to improve the image and enhance the dignity and honor an respect for Filipino HSW is just another ploy by the government especially POEA to raise money as some groups are protesting.

"With the report from the Hong Kong NGO that recruitment agencies are requiring training and assessment for returning workers from Hong Kong, who are extorting money from the workers then?" Baldoz asked.

Baldoz said the POEA is now gathering evidence against the said agencies and will file appropriate recruitment violation cases against them. She also sought the help of Filcomsin Hong Kong to correct the misinformation being disseminated by unscrupulous agencies to HSWs in Hong Kong.